

Strategy Boards & Committee:	Date:
Safer City Partnership Strategy Board	27/09/2021
Subject: Administration of Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) Funds	Public
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services, City of London Corporation	For Decision
Author: Valeria Cadena, Community Safety Manager, City of London Corporation	
Summary	
<p>The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) provides for a portion of the value of seized criminal assets to be redistributed in order to fund community safety and crime-reduction initiatives. Applications submitted to access funding have been managed by the Community Safety Manager of the City of London Corporation. To ensure that effective due diligence and robust procedures are in place, it is proposed that management of awarding and administration of POCA funds is transferred to the Central Grants Unit (CGU).</p>	
Recommendations	
<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the transfer of grant management and administration to the CGU. 	

Main Report

Background

1. POCA allows for a portion of money made from criminal gains to be redistributed to support community safety and crime-reduction initiatives.
2. The CGU was established in 2016 following recommendations from the Effectiveness of Grant Making Service Based Review. The aim of the review was to increase the strategic impact of grant-making, ensure that grants are managed more efficiently and effectively, improve the consistency and quality of the customer experience, and so bring consequential reputational benefits.
3. The CGU is co-located with the City Bridge Trust (CBT) team to facilitate a consistent approach and harmonise service standards. The Managing

Director of Bridge House Estate and Chief Charity Officer, responsible for the grant-making activities of CBT has overview of the CGU, with relevant input from the Charity Finance team (Chamberlain's Department), with the work being delivered by the Head of CGU and the CGU team.

Current Position

4. An application process currently allows for agencies and organisations to bid for funding to support community safety and crime-reduction initiatives.
5. This process is currently overseen and administered the Community Safety Manager, City of London Corporation, who would like to improve due diligence and strengthen structural procedures in the administration of POCA funds to ensure transparency, good governance and effective use of POCA money.
6. The community safety team doesn't have the resources to oversee the performance and implementation of the bids. Therefore, it is difficult to assess the efficiency of the bids and value for money in community safety initiatives.

Proposals

7. It is proposed that the management of the grant-making process and administration of POCA funds be transferred to the CGU.
8. The CGU has been managing and delivering grant programmes on behalf of the City of London Corporation since 2016 through the Central Grants Programme, the City Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund, and on behalf of a number of small charities where the City of London is Trustee.
9. The CGU is co-located with the CBT team to facilitate a consistent approach and harmonise grant-making service standards.
10. The CGU has a strong track record of delivering grant programmes in collaboration with departments and service-based Committees. The CGU provides an online application portal, Grant Management Database, with comprehensive due diligence, project analysis, and full Committee reporting.
11. Once grants are awarded, the CGU manages all grant agreements and ensures that projects are monitored and evaluated in line with agreed outcomes.
12. In collaboration with officers and Members across the City of London, the CGU currently manages the CIL Neighbourhood Fund, and Central Grants Programme.
13. The CGU also delivers grant programmes for the following City of London charities: Combined Relief of Poverty Charity; Combined Education Charity; City Educational Trust; and Emanuel Hospital Charity.
14. If agreed, the CGU proposes to deliver two grant programmes each financial year. Deadlines will be set 12 weeks before a Safer City Partnership Strategy Board Meeting.

15. Applications will be fully assessed by the CGU. This will include robust due diligence that will look at finance, governance and safeguarding. Assessments will include full project analysis and recommendations. The CGU will work with the Community Safety Manager to obtain expert input on applications before presenting to Committee for discussion and approval.
16. Once approved, the CGU will manage all ongoing grant management and administration, including managing payments, offer letters, liaison with grant holders, and project monitoring and evaluation.
17. The cost of grant management and administration is no more than 5% to 10% of the total grant spend of each programme. From analysis of the POCA Fund criteria, it is expected that it would cost around £5,500 per grant round. This includes the ongoing monitoring, evaluation and reporting costs. Therefore, there will be an initial total cost of £11,000 annually to deliver this programme.
18. All CGU Grant Programmes are recorded on timesheets to ensure accurate recording and re-charging of time. A review of officer time will be carried out after 12 months, to ensure that the programme is value for money.

Strategic Implications

19. The successful transfer of the administration of POCA funding to the CGU will ensure effective oversight, scrutiny and management of funding awards made, as well as long-term monitoring of initiatives.
20. Effective administration of POCA money will improve the ability to fund initiatives that help to improve community safety and reduce crime.
21. The impact of such initiatives will help to deliver the SCP's aim of ensuring that the City of London is a safe place for people to live, learn, work and visit.

Financial Implications

22. There is a cost associated with moving the administration and management of grant applications to the CGU. An initial £11,000 needs to be budgeted for annually to ensure that the unit can deliver two grant rounds each year. The costs contribute to officer time spent on assessment, grant management and administration, as well as the use of grant management software and the online application portal.

Conclusion

23. The transfer of the administration of POCA funding to the CBU – which has a track record of effectively managing City of London Corporation grants – is one that will improve management, procedures and due diligence of POCA money.
24. This will strengthen scrutiny, governance and long-term monitoring of initiatives to ensure that POCA money is being awarded effectively and utilised in a cost-effective manner to create lasting positive change.

Appendix

- Safer City Partnership Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) funding criteria 2021–2022

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